



Best Practices 2000

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Building a Better Tomorrow 2000

Three years ago we fundamentally changed the manner in which the Department of Housing and Urban Development conducts business. It was a bold step that required a fundamental paradigm shift. We dared to step out and make a personal commitment to restoring the public trust by achieving and demonstrating competence in the way we and our partners deliver services. We recognized our responsibility in helping people empower themselves.

Our success is unquestionable. Great strides have been made following HUD 2020 Management Reforms.



We have forged partnerships with local governments, communities and the

private sector – something never before achieved. We are empowering communities and individuals, creating grassroots actions that are lifting these communities to a higher level. We are laying the foundation to develop and perpetuate a unified HUD approach to meeting community needs with the restructuring of field organizations to include community empowerment teams.

While our traditional goals remain the same – fighting for fair housing,

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Effective Techniques of Top Performers!

If I Had a Hammer

Thanks to the support of HUD and other local and national institutes, things have markedly changed for the Wise County, Virginia, housing construction industry. Over the last few years, despite a double-digit



unemployment rate, the Wise County housing construction industry has lacked trained workers. But things have changed in this Mid-Atlantic County. Reducing unemployment and retraining the work force for construction are now the primary focus of the Wise County Redevelopment and Housing Authority's "If I Had a Hammer" program.

The "If I Had a Hammer" program was developed to meet an important need in this growing community. It not only provides housing construction training and training in housing development trades like plumbing, wiring, masonry and carpentry, it also provides educational support needs for the individuals enrolled in the program.

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From Welfare to Work – Meeting a HUD Challenge

Cities across the United States are meeting the challenge—how to move recipients off the welfare system and into the workforce. A primary example of one of those cities meeting this challenge is Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. HUD's State Office is taking a pro-active role in helping the residents of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania obtain self-sufficiency. Currently Philadelphia has 60,000 welfare families required to find jobs or lose their welfare income. Of those families, 1,500 reside in housing provided by HUD.

Under the leadership of Community Builders Mike Levine and Eileen Morgan, this Best Practice reached a

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Through this program, the participants, mostly lower income assisted-housing residents, have successfully constructed eight new houses and rehabilitated four others. The program, while creating full-time jobs for participants, has also improved job and life skills, improved housing stocks, created opportunities for more housing improvement program funding, and even provided new homeownership for two of its participants.

What makes this Best Practice unique is its many crosscutting benefits. Of the 23 participants to date, 16 are now employed, four remain in the program, and promises for future successes are good.

Like any new program, there have been challenges to overcome. For example, the primary challenges of this



program included achieving full participation in the classroom portion, high quality work by trainees, and the completion of work in a timely manner. These challenges have been overcome by paying the participants while in the class, insisting that quality not be compromised by maintaining a positive, productive atmosphere, and improving time management by providing clear, up front instructions.

The project started with a \$40,000 grant from the state Communities for Opportunities (CFO) program, followed by an additional \$40,000 from the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) grant, funds totaling \$40,000 from three local Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) projects, as well as an additional \$120,000 HUD Public Housing Development Grant. HUD's role in the development and implementation of this program was through the participation of the Wise County Redevelopment and Housing Authority. It allowed the "If I Had a Hammer" program to become a part of HUD's public housing development program. Specifically, HUD has provided guidance and suggestions in the development of the program.

Key participants in the development of the program as one of HUD's "Best



Practices" include: WCRHA staff (particularly Steve Garrett, Jimmy McElrath, and Charles McConnell), Wise County Schools (Jim Price, Director of Wise Skills Center), Rebecca Scott from the Regional Adult Education Office, and Todd Christensen from the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development.

"The program has truly achieved its goal by providing job skills training for an industry short of trained workers in an area of high unemployment," stated Charles McConnell, WCRHA staff member. "It has increased the supply of available housing in Wise County through housing development and rehabilitation. But most importantly, everyone has benefited from this program — the participants themselves, the occupants of houses developed or rehabilitated, and employers of program participants." ♦

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large segment of the welfare recipient population in Philadelphia during 1999 and provided them with the tools necessary to bring them out of their state of poverty.

Training was an essential component of this program. Before they could help the residents, it was imperative that managers and residential leaders be knowledgeable about welfare reform law, welfare to work resources, HUD self-sufficiency program funding, public housing

reform, and children's health insurance. One thousand managers and residential leaders were trained in these areas before training was extended to the welfare families. Using communication technology, the HUD program pushed electronic education and training where welfare families live, doubling the number of Neighborhood Networks — computer learning centers in public housing. These centers dispersed 300 recycled computers, and brought in child care training to 50 multifamily and public housing residents.

"It is important for those living in HUD-assisted housing to be connected with services and activities that can make them self-sufficient," said Levine. "To accomplish this task, we challenged all the potential partners such as housing authorities, local governments, welfare agencies and advocacy organizations to accomplish one common goal — get people out of poverty."

Levine is the first to admit that this was no easy task. "Bringing the Partnership to fruition was an incredible challenge," he said. However,

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increasing affordable housing and homeownership, reducing homelessness, promoting jobs and economic opportunity, empowering people and communities and restoring the public trust – we have focused on you, our partners working in the communities.

EMPOWERMENT

We have empowered constituents to create programs tailored more specifically to meet the needs of your communities by instituting a bottom-up, community driven management style. HUD 2020 emphasizes self-sufficiency and self-reliance while strengthening values of work, family, responsibility and opportunity to help citizens become more productive members of society. HUD now provides you with the tools to implement your own revitalization strategies, through various methodologies, rather than just issuing directives and over-regulating communities. We have learned that no one community works like the rest, so no one solution will work for all. It is together, that our

collaborative efforts with other federal agencies and the private sector enable us to aggregate efforts to promote self-empowerment.

RESTORING PUBLIC TRUST

Restoring public trust is not a highly visible effort like building public private partnerships to promote self-empowerment however, HUD has made major strides in this area. In our efforts to meet the needs of our constituents, HUD 2020 has promoted the consolidation and reorganization of programs. You, our community partners, have effectively used HUD programs to serve your communities. Your successes in carrying out community missions have restored public trust in us, our programs and demonstrated a wise use of taxpayer dollars.

BEST PRACTICES

Information is a key empowerment tool. It provides a road map to what works, how it impacts the community and how it can be replicated in communities across the United States. Through Best Practices, you provide information that we share

nationally that demonstrates how empowerment is occurring.

The “Best Practices” program showcases the practices that are models of success – not only in empowerment and building trust, but in other areas important to HUD as well. Best Practices provide a forum for showing and sharing what works – not just what looks good on paper or in the media. It is an opportunity for partners to convey their successes and give others the chance to implement programs that have been successful. Indeed, these success models establish performance standards that, when shared, encourage others to strive to achieve the same or better level of performance.

Through our collective efforts to deliver the best services possible through Best Practices, empowerment and restoring public trust, we are providing hope and making a positive difference in peoples’ lives, which is what matters most.

Together Everyone Achieves More
– especially our clients. ◆

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through hard work, the program was able to overcome the obstacles and achieve success. The successes of this HUD program are numerous. For example, a 12-week childcare training program resulted in 37 women successfully moving on to paid internships and jobs. Another example is the creation of a public housing computer center in Montgomery County, as well as several other computer centers projected to open during the course of the year.

“Our Best Practice is unique because we are trying to go about this program in a systematic way by using our position at HUD to address the HUD program and the Welfare-to-

Work Program in Pennsylvania. We are empowering individuals by helping themselves to become self-sufficient and rise out of poverty,” said Levine.

The development of this Best Practice is a blessing to the state of Pennsylvania. There are many groups that benefit from the services that the HUD State Office provides. Residents of public and assisted housing in Pennsylvania, and those in low-income communities and community development programs are the major beneficiaries.

There were many individuals responsible for the success of this Best Practice. HUD’s Pennsylvania State Office was the driving force in implementing this program. However, they could not have done it without the

help of other participants such as the HUD Community Builders, HUD Multifamily Housing staff, HUD Public Housing staff and the numerous outside state and national partners that made the program a success.

What this program has accomplished so far, is only the tip of the iceberg. “I think we have set something in motion with this Best Practice, but we need to continue pursuing this task,” Levine said. “There is a great potential at this time to help people. If we can connect our residents with the right resources, we will see the results in the next three to five years when people develop more skills, when more computer centers are created and when children receive the care that they deserve...there is still a lot to be done.” ◆

Best Practice Focus Group Sessions

On February 3rd, HUD began hosting a series of Best Practice focus group sessions. These sessions bring together industry practitioners, management, and other experts from housing program areas, along with HUD Best Practice Team members, to develop and refine models by which Best Practices can be identified, categorized, and utilized. There are two sides to the model equation that the Best Practice Team is addressing. The focus groups deal with the framework of the “What” side: What are the strategic objectives and key performance indicators; what are the critical success factors and major barriers to success; what are the desired results or outcomes of success? Individually and in total, these define the requirements of Best Practices. From them flow the second side of the model, the “How”. It is the Best Practices

themselves that will populate the “How” side. How success is achieved, how barriers are overcome, how outcomes are measured and reviewed for continuous improvement, etc. The focus group sessions are, of course, not the only source of the “What”, but they are a vital, necessary part in order to both identify the most relevant Best Practices, and most importantly, to leverage them wherever practical for the greatest benefit of everyone.

A secondary, but also important, objective of these focus group sessions is to solicit input from the industry on “areas of need” within HUD programs for the provision of technical assistance. The information received on technical assistance will be used to develop high-value workshops for the 2000 Best Practices Symposium.

BEST PRACTICE FOCUS GROUP SESSIONS

Homeownership	March 30, 2000
Public Housing Safety/Drug Elimination	April 6, 2000
Economic Development	April 13, 2000
University Partnerships	April 20, 2000
Neighborhood Networks	April 27, 2000
Faith Based Partnerships	May 4, 2000
Native American Programs	May 11, 2000
Community Development	May 18, 2000
Special Needs Housing	May 25, 2000
Rental Production (Hope VI, CDBG, HOME)	June 1, 2000
Youth Development	June 8, 2000
Resident Services	June 15, 2000
Rental Assistance/Section 8	June 22, 2000
Homeowner Rehabilitation	June 29, 2000

For more information contact Neil Brown or Mary Barry on (202) 708-1027.

2000 Best Practices Nomination Process

Submitting a Best Practice has never been easier. Now HUD staff, partners and other outside organizations can submit Best Practice nominations using HUD's internet site. The 2000 Best Practice nominations process opened on March 20, 2000 and runs through May 31, 2000. You may access the automated nomination system at <http://www.hud.gov/bestpractices/bpnom.html>.

REVAMPED NOMINATION PROCESS

HUD has improved the process for nominating Best Practices by allowing electronic submissions. Paper nominations will also be accepted. The new and improved Best Practices database collects more information, tracks the nominations throughout the review process and provides valuable information on Best Practices across the country.

BEST PRACTICES

A Best Practice must be replicable in other areas of the country, region, or local jurisdiction and generate a significant and demonstrable positive impact on those being served or managed. The nomination must also demonstrate at least one of the following characteristics:

- Effectively use partnerships among government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and private businesses;
- Creative problem solving;

- Overcome serious obstacles to program implementation; or,
- Demonstrate efficiencies achieved (i.e., time saved, resources saved, etc.).

Special consideration will be given to those projects or programs that either:

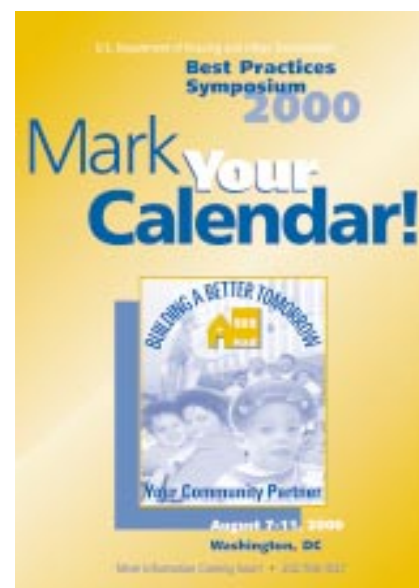
- Address two or more of HUD's six Strategic Goals within the same project or effort. HUD's six Strategic Goals are:
 - Fighting for fair housing
 - Increasing affordable housing and homeownership
 - Reducing homelessness
 - Promoting jobs and economic opportunity
 - Empowering people and communities
 - Restoring public trust
- Use newly developed concepts, technology and/or resources to significantly improve the delivery of housing and community development services, or
- Demonstrate the effective use of multiple HUD programs and resources, as well as private resources, to significantly improve the quality of life throughout the community.

2000 Focus

The 2000 Best Practices program is revitalizing efforts to demonstrate how HUD programs work and provide technical assistance to those in need. HUD staff are being asked to identify

nearly 1,500 Best Practices as a result of their monitoring and compliance efforts. The remainder will be nominated based on staff knowledge of Best Practices that should be recognized and replicated across the country. Outside partners, industry groups and individuals may also nominate programs/projects for replication. This will provide the Department with an adequate supply of programs/projects that can be highlighted and used to improve overall performance among HUD programs.

Given this ambitious effort, you should begin submitting your Best Practice nominations for consideration. Go to HUD's web site and start sending us your nominations for review. ♦



Best Practices 2000

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Building A Better Tomorrow

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